Hereward and Grettir

Brothers from Another Mother?

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Old Norse–Icelandic literature and Anglo–Saxon literature have customarily been seen as close cousins, notwithstanding the great gaps in time and space that are sometimes silently elided in asserting the family connection.[1] The continuing debate over the nature of the connections that seem to link *Beowulf* and *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar* highlights how fraught such a notion can quickly become.[2] This paper again focuses on *Grettis saga*—which in its current form dates from the early fourteenth century but seems based on an earlier account by Sturla Þórðarson (1214–84)[3] that itself draws on earlier oral material—and seeks to try to bridge those gaps by considering a body of evidence, most of it seen from traditional and nativist points of view as being in the wrong language and from the wrong period: namely a series of Latin texts, generally written within 150 years of the Norman Conquest, that strongly serve to underline the family ties that bind Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon literature in sometimes

1. The literature is vast; see, for example, focusing only on *Beowulf*, Theodore, M. Andersson, "Sources and Analogues," in Robert E. Bjork and John D. Niles, *A "Beowulf" Handbook* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 125–48; Andy Orchard, *A Critical Companion to "Beowulf"* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2005), 98–129.

2. See Andy Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the "Beowulf" Manuscript*, revised paperback edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 140–68; Magnús Fjalldal, *The Long Arm of Coincidence: The Frustrated Connection between "Beowulf" and "Grettis saga"* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).

3. Sigurður Nordal, *Sturla Þórðarson og Grettis saga*, Studia Islandica 4 (Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 1938).

surprising ways. The aim here is to highlight the complex series of interrelationships that connect these texts both with each other and with Old Norse, and specifically Old Icelandic, literature. It will also be suggested that still further parallels with both Anglo-Norman and Franco-Scandinavian traditions make it possible to suggest both a conduit and a milieu (to use suitably French terms) for such interchange to take place.

At least four Anglo-Latin texts are at issue, if we use the term Anglo-Latin to mean Latin texts likely written in England or by an Englishman; they are given here in a chronological order that accounts for their final form, but does not preclude the high likelihood that one or more of them may well rely on earlier documents or oral traditions, as indeed several claim:

1. *Encomium Emmae reginae* ("In praise of Queen Emma," composed ca. 1041–42);[4]
2. *Gesta Herwardi incliti exulis et militis* ("The exploits of Hereward, the famous outlaw and warrior," composed ca. 1107–31);[5]
3. *Vita et passio Waldeui comitis* ("The life of and death of Earl Waltheof," composed at some point in the twelfth century);[6]
4. *Vita Haroldi* ("The life of Harold," composed ca. 1205–15).[7]

As far as the only clearly pre-Conquest text is concerned, we know that the *Encomium Emmae* was written by a monk of Flanders, albeit

4. *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, ed. Alistair Campbell, Camden Classic Reprints 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

5. The late Paul Gerhardt Schmidt and I were collaborating on a new text of the *Gesta Herwardi* for Oxford Medieval Texts; here I quote from Schmidt's transcription and edition, which is far superior to that found elsewhere, with parenthetical cross-references (noted as such only in the first instance below) to the corresponding page numbers in *De Gestis Herwardi: Le gesta di Ervardo*, ed. and trans. Alberto Meneghetti (Florence: Edizioni ETS, 2013); cf. also *De Gestis Herwardi Saxonis*, ed. S. H. Miller and W. D. Sweeting, in *Fenland Notes and Queries* 3 (1895): 7–72; *Hereward, together with De Gestis Herwardi Saxonis*, ed. Trevor A. Bevis (Thorney: Westrydale Press, 1982); Michael Swanton, trans., *Three Lives of the Last Englishmen* (New York: Garland, 1984), 45–88; and Swanton, trans., "The Deeds of Hereward," in *Medieval Outlaws: Twelve Tales in Modern English Translation*, ed. Thomas H. Ohlgren (West Lafayette: Parlor: 2005), 29–99.

6. *Vita S. Waldevi*, *Chroniques anglo-normandes*, ed. Francisque Michel, 3 vols. (Rouen: E. Frère, 1836–40), 1:104–20.

7. *Vita Haroldi: The Romance of the Life of Harold King of England*, ed. Walter de Gray Birch (London: Stock, 1885).

in England, while from its *Preface* we can infer that the author of the *Gesta Herwardi* was uncomfortable with English.[8] But each text has clear English connections, as well as emphatic Anglo-Norman interest, an aspect enshrined in the closely intertwined biographies of their respective protagonists. Queen Emma was born in Normandy, and was successively English queen to the Anglo-Saxon King Æthelred ("the Unready," who ruled 978–1014) and the Danish King Cnut ("the Great," at least as he was known in Scandinavia, who ruled 1016–35), while Hereward ("the Wake," ca. 1035–72) was outlawed by Emma's son King Edward ("the Confessor," who ruled 1042–66), but returned to fight the Norman King William ("the Conqueror" or "the Bastard," depending on one's point of view, who ruled 1066–87), being reconciled with the king and apparently ultimately buried at Croyland Abbey.[9] Waltheof was deprived of his father Siward's earldom of Northumbria by King Edward, who substituted Tostig Godwinson. Waltheof married William's niece, Judith, in 1070, but was beheaded six years later after taking part in a revolt against William; he too is said to have been buried at Croyland Abbey, which has a fifteenth-century statue of him.[10] King Harold Godwinson (who

8. See James Dunbar Pickering, "The Legend of Hereward the Saxon: an Investigation of *De Gestis Herwardi Saxonis*, Its Historical Basis, Its Debt to Saga and Early Romance, Its Place in English Literary History" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1964), 60–61, who bases his arguments mainly on Martin, who suggests that the sole surviving manuscript of the *Gesta* was copied by "a scribe . . . comparatively ignorant in Latin, and the author was probably not much his superior in that respect." *Lestorie Des Engles*, ed. Thomas D. Hardy and Charles T. Martin, Rolls Series 91 (Nendeln: Kraus Reprints, 1966), lii. Martin goes on to suggest that Richard was not a native speaker of English, given his apparent difficulty with understanding terms like Old English *utlah* or *utlag* (he gives Hereward's cook the name Utlamhe and Utlac); likewise, he seems to have confused Old English *feax* ("hair") with Latin *facies* ("face") in describing the unkempt Hereward as being *prolixa facie* ("with a long face"), when more likely it is the traditionally long hair of the Anglo-Saxons that is at issue (373).

9. See the following: Edward Augustus Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest of England*, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1867–79); Cyril Hart, "Hereward the Wake," *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 65 (1974): 28–40; *Hereward*, Bevis; John Hayward, "Hereward the Outlaw," *Journal of Medieval History* 14 (1988): 293–304; Cyril Hart, "Hereward the Wake and his Companions," in his *The Danelaw* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 1992), 625–48; Victor Head, *Hereward* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995); Peter Rex, *The English Resistance: The Underground War Against the Normans* (Stroud: Tempus, 2004), esp. 139–64; Rex, *Hereward: The Last Englishman* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005).

10. See F. S. Scott, "Earl Waltheof of Northumbria," *Archaeologia Aeliana* 30 (1952): 149–215; Robert M. Stein, *Reality Fictions: Romance, History, and Governmental Authority, 1025–1180* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 91–103.

ruled for most of 1066), famously fell at Hastings on October 14, 1066, attempting to oppose William's invasion, after having successfully seen off the earlier attempt to seize the crown by King Haraldr harðráði of Norway (1047–66; he was also king of Denmark until 1064). King Haraldr was accompanied by Harold's own brother, the aforementioned Tostig Godwinson, who died alongside him at the Battle of Stamford Bridge on September 25, 1066.

While the *Encomium Emmae* is the only one of these texts to predate the Norman Conquest, it nonetheless seems to be the result of profound Anglo-Scandinavian influence, notwithstanding the self-proclaimed provenance of its author, an influence most easily explained by composition at the Anglo-Scandinavian court of Cnut and his sons in England rather than in a religious house in Flanders.[11] So, for example, the descriptions of the invasion fleets of both Cnut and his father Svein seem to nod toward accounts of the so-called *landvættir* who protected Iceland against the invasion fleet of Harald Bluetooth (Svein's father and Cnut's grandfather, who died in 985 or 986), a tale told most fully by the Icelander Snorri Sturluson (1178/79–1241; he was the uncle of the aforementioned Sturla) in chapter 33 of his *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*.[12] Elsewhere, we find a passage in the *Encomium* which describes a miraculous raven banner:

> Erat namque eis uexillum miri portenti, quod licet credam posse esse incredibile lectori, tamen, quia uerum est, uerae inseram lectioni. Enimuero dum esset simplissimo candidissimoque intextum serico, nulliusque figurae in eo inserta esset imago, tempore belli semper in eo uidebatur coruus ac si intextus, in uictoria suorum quasi hians ore excutiensque alas instabilisque pedibus, et suis deuictis quietissimus totoque corpore demissus. (bk. 2, ch. 9)
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> Now they had a banner of wonderfully strange nature, which though I believe that it may be incredible to the reader, yet since it is true,

11. See Simon Keynes, "Cnut's Earls," in *The Reign of Cnut, King of England, Denmark, and Norway*, ed. A. R. Rumble (London: Leicester University Press, 1994), 56–58; Andy Orchard, "The Literary Background to the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*," *Journal of Medieval Latin* 11 (2001): 157.

12. *Heimskringla*, ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, 3 vols., Íslenzk fornrit 26–28 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1941), 1:271–72; see Orchard, "Literary Background," 163–65.

> I will introduce the matter into my true history. For while it was woven of the plainest and whitest silk, and the representation of no figure was inserted into it, in time of war a raven was always seen as if embroidered on it, in the hour of its owners' victory opening its beak, flapping its wings, and restive on its feet, but very subdued and drooping with its whole body when they were defeated. (All translations mine)

Other texts likewise contain references to similar raven banners, always in a Norse or Anglo-Scandinavian context.[13]

In the case of the *Vita et passio Waldeui comitis*, an unusual text surviving in a single manuscript and perhaps written at Ramsey, the raven banner in question appears in the course of a prefatory portion of the text separately titled "Gesta antecessorum" (The exploits of the ancestors); this preface offers in its full form an interesting analogue for the mixture of literary elements from disparate traditions of exactly the kind found in all the texts under discussion:[14]

> Tradunt relaciones antiquorum quod vir quidam nobilis, quem Dominus permisit, contra solitum ordinem humane propaginis, ex quodam albo urso patre, muliere generosa matre, proceari, Ursus genuit Spratlingum; Spratlingus Ulsium; Ulsius Beorn, cognomento Beresune, hoc est filius ursi.
>
> Hic Beorn Dacus fuit natione, comes egregius et miles illustris. In signum autem illius diversitatis speciei ex parte generantium, produxerat ei natura paternas auriculas, sive ursi. In aliis autem speciei materne assimilabatur. Hic autem, post multas virtutis ac milicie experiencias filium genuit fortitudinis et milicie paterne probum imitatorem.
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> Nomen autem huic Siwardus (cognomento Diere, id est grossus); qui, quasi supra se elatus pre gratia probitatis ei innate, natale solum

13. See C. E. Wright, *The Cultivation of Saga in Anglo-Saxon England* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1936), 126–33; Nils Lukman, "The Raven Banner and the Changing Ravens: A Viking Miracle from Carolingian Court Poetry to Saga and Arthurian Romance," *Classica et Mediaevalia* 19 (1958): 133–51; Orchard, "Literary Background," 168–69.

14. See also Christine Rauer, *Beowulf and the Dragon: Parallels and Analogues* (Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2000), 126–32; Orchard, "Literary Background," 169–72.

habuit contemptui, patri suo jure hereditario succedere vilipendens, jussitque navem sibi magnam et fortem preparari et bene muniri in cunctis necessariis, tam in armamentis navis, quam in victualibus et armaturis corpori humano congruentibus. Quo facto, eandem ingressus, cum quinquaginta militibus probis et preelectis sibi associatis, mare conscendit, velaque ventis applicans tandem apud Orkaneiam portum invenit salubrem.

In insula autem illa habitabat draco quidam, qui erat non solum in bestiis, verum et in populo, strages maxima. Cujus fama ad aures Siwardi rerum gesta deferente, cum eo pugnam inire satatgebat; non operas locans arenariorum more, sed robur corporis et animi virtutem in hoc declarans, eum devicit et ab insula effugavit. Reversusque, navem ingressus, aquas remis sollicitans, processu temporis Northumberlandiam applicuit, ibique alterius draconis fama ad aures ejus convolavit.

Quem cum quereret ut eum similiter vel effugaret vel interficeret, videt collem quemdam arduum, et hominem quemdam senem in summitate sedentem; ad quem cum se divertisset ut rumores de dicto dracone inquireret, in colle residens, eum nomine suo proprio salutans, sic allocutus est: "Siwarde, bene novi qua de causa iter istud proficisceris: videlicet ut vires cum dracone experiaris; sed in vanum laboras: eum enim invenire non poteris; sed revertere ad socios tuos, et dicam tibi quid accidere fatatum est. Cum navem fueris ingressus, statim aura tibi dabitur grata; et prospero cursu cum vela ventis applicueris, portum invenies saluberrimum in fluvio quodam cui nomen Tamisia; quem cum conscenderis, tandem reperies civitatem quamdam cui applicabis, nomen autem ejus Londonie; ibidemque regem illius regni invenies, qui te in servicio suo retinebit, et terram sine magna mora dispendio tibi conferet."

Siwardus autem respondit se non adhibere magnam fidem sermonibus ejus, et si sic reverteretur, socii sui illud tanquam figmentum arbitrarentur. Senex autem a sinu suo vexillum quoddam extraxit et ei tribuit, quo facilius socii ejus ei fidem adhiberent. Nomen autem vexillo imposuit idem senex Ravenlandeye, quod interpretatur corvus terrae terror. Quo accepto, Siwardus ad socios suos rediens, navem ingressus est, et juxta senis vaticinia, post multas maris fluctuandis inundaciones, demum Londonias applicuit. (*Vita S. Waldevi*, Michel, 104–7)

The traditions of men of old relate that a certain noble man, whom the Lord allowed, contrary to the customary rule of human procreation, to be produced by a white bear as father and a high-born lady as mother, was known as Ursus ["bear"]. Ursus begot Spratlingus; Spratlingus begot Ulsius; Ulsius begot Beorn, nicknamed "Beresune," that is "Bear's Son."

This Beorn was a Dane by race, a distinguished nobleman and a renowned warrior. But as a sign of that diversity of species amongst his ancestors, nature had produced in him his father's tiny ears, those of a bear; in other things, however, he was like his mother's kind. This man, moreover, after many demonstrations of might and military prowess, begot a son, a splendid match for his father's strength and military prowess.

His name was Siward, nicknamed "Diere," which is to say "the Stout"; and he, as if inflated beyond himself because of his innate splendor, held the land of his birth in contempt, despising to succeed his father by hereditary right, and ordered a large and mighty ship to be prepared for him and properly equipped with all essentials, both as far as what was fitting for the ship's armament and the men's provisions and armor. Having done this, he boarded that ship, with fifty tried and tested warriors and comrades hand-picked by himself, and put to sea; setting his sails to the winds, he finally made safe harbor in Orkney.

But in that island there lived a certain dragon, which caused the greatest damage not only to animals, but also to the people. When the news of what had happened reached Siward's ears, he was keen to enter combat against it, not renting out his efforts after the fashions of gladiators, but simply showing thereby the power of his body and the strength of his resolve. He defeated it and forced it from the island. Returning, boarding ship, and churning up the waters with his oars, in due course he reached Northumbria, where news of a second dragon reached his ears.

When he went looking for it, to drive it away or kill it in the same way, he saw a certain steep hill and a certain old man sitting at the top; and when he turned toward him to ask for information about said dragon, the man sitting on the hill addressed him by his own name and spoke as follows: "Siward, I know full well for what reason you have made this journey, namely to test your strength against the dragon.

> But you are wasting your time: you won't be able to find it. Go back to your comrades instead, and I will tell you what is fated to happen to you. When you have boarded the ship, you will straightaway get a fair wind, and when you set your sails to the winds on a favorable course, you will find a very safe harbor in a certain river called the Thames; and when you follow it upstream, you will reach at last a city, where you will land, and its name is London. There you will find the king of that kingdom, and he will keep you in his service and quite soon he will grant you land as a gift."
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> But Siward answered that he did not have much faith in his words, and that if he returned like this, his comrades would reckon it so much hogwash. But the old man took from his bosom a certain banner and gave it to him, so that his comrades would have more faith in him. The same old man gave the banner the name "Ravenlandeye," which means "Raven, Land's Terror." Having taken it, Siward went back to his comrades, boarded ship, and, just as the old man had foreseen, after many swelling surges of the sea, he finally reached London.

One might note that the appearance of the mysterious old man seated atop "a certain steep hill" (*collem quendam arduum*) resembles closely the appearance of the god Odin to Siward's Norse namesake, the dragon-slaying Sigurðr, in a prose passage following stanza 16 of the Norse Eddic poem *Reginsmál*. Sigurðr and his foster-father "met a great storm and sought shelter by a rocky promontory; a man stood on the rocks" (*Peir fengo storm mikinn oc beitto fyrir bergsnǫs nacqvara. Maðr einn stóð á bergino*).[15] That the old man in the "Gesta antecessorum" addresses Siward by name without being told it, that he exhorts him to kill a dragon, and that he gives him a raven banner all attest to his Odinic qualities.[16] It may be significant here that the old man is introduced with a notably alliterative phrase ("senem in summitate sedentem") that may point to a Germanic poetic source, where such alliteration is structural. The relationship of this text to Norse literature (and

15. Andy Orchard, trans., *The Elder Edda: A Book of Viking Lore* (London: Penguin Classics, 2011), 158; Gustav Neckel and Hans Kuhn, eds., *Edda: Die Lieder des Codex Regius nebst verwandten Denkmälern*, vol. 1, *Text*, 5th ed. (Heidelberg: Winter, 1983), 177.

16. See, for example, *Grímnismál* 20 (Neckel, *Edda: Lieder*, 61); Orchard, *Elder Edda*, 53 and 297n.

specifically to Eddic poetry) has been the subject of surprisingly little debate; it will be clear, however, that in its ready incorporation of apparently Scandinavian material, the *Vita Waldeui* provides a useful analogue to the *Encomium Emmae.*

The bilingual genealogy provided for Beorn ("bear") makes one suspect that the name Ulsius masks the name Ulf ("wolf"), especially since warriors fighting in the guise of both wolves and bears are again indicative of Odinic practice,[17] as Snorri Sturluson reports (*Ynglinga saga*, ch. 6):

> Óðinn kunni svá gera at í orrustu urðu óvinir hans blindir eða daufir eða óttafullir, en vápn þeira bitu eigi heldr en vendir, en hans menn fóru brynjulausir ok váru galnir sem hundar eða vargar, bitu í skjǫldu sína, váru sterkir sem birnir eða griðungar. Þeir drápu mannfólkit, en hvártki eldr né járn orti á þá. Þat er kallaðr berserksgangr. (*Heimskringla*, Bjarni Aðalbjarnason, 1:17)

> Odin could make his enemies in battle blind, or deaf, or panic-struck, and their weapons so blunt that they could cut no better than a willow-wand; but his own men dashed forward without armor, and became as frenzied as dogs or wolves. They chewed their shield-rims, and became as strong as bears or bulls, and slaughtered people at a single stroke, but neither fire nor iron could touch them. It was called "going berserk."

In the context of Norse and Anglo-Saxon interchange, it may be significant that Siward's own name is a compromise between the Norse form Sigurðr (the principal hero of the Volsung family so favored by Odin), and its Old English equivalent, Sigeweard. Certainly, the historical Siward may have been related to that historical Earl Ulf (d. 1027) who is generally held to have married Cnut's sister Estrith,[18] and was the father of King Svein Estrithsson

17. See Stephan Grundy, "Shapeshifting and Berserkergang," in *Translation, Transformation, and Transubstantiation*, ed. Carol Poster and Richard Utz (Evanston: IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998), 104–22.

18. M. K. Lawson, *Cnut: The Danes in England in the Early Eleventh Century* (London: Longman, 1993), 97n53, says that the identification of Ulf with the husband of Estrith (Estrid) is commonly made but not certain.

(reigned 1047–74), as well as the son of Thorgils (or Thorkell) Sprakling, whose name presumably underlies the form *Spratlingus* (a scribal error for *Spraclingus*?) here. Saxo Grammaticus (ca. 1150–1220) in his *Gesta Danorum* ("The deeds of the Danes") names him Thurgillus Sprageleg and likewise reports he was the son of a bear, and died at the Battle of Svöld, ostensibly alongside King Óláfr Tryggvason.[19] Ulf's sister, Gytha Thorkelsdóttir, is said to have married Godwin, Earl of Wessex, and together they produced (among others) Tostig, Harold, and Edith (who was married to Edward the Confessor). The interpenetration of all these four Anglo-Latin texts is extraordinary in terms of the *dramatis personae* alone; the implicit connection of Siward to Thorgils Sprakling, who perhaps perished alongside Óláfr Tryggvason, links the *Vita Waldeui* to the next text under discussion.

A more ambivalent relationship between an Anglo-Latin text and a Norse tradition is witnessed in the *Vita Haroldi*, which turns on the notion that Harold Godwinson survived the Battle of Hastings, and depicts his later life in ways strongly parallel to Norse accounts of the supposed survival of Óláfr Tryggvason after the Battle of Svöld, which predates Hastings by sixty-six years. The notion that Óláfr Tryggvason jumped ship at the disastrous battle and survived has a long history, beginning with a rumor first mentioned and then dismissed by his own poet Hallfreðr Óttarsson vandræðaskáld, but persisting in the *Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagiensium* of Theodoricus (written ca. 1180), which also mentions that Óláfr traveled to distant lands for the sake of his soul.[20] The same tale is retold in different versions from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries in the sagas of Óláfr Tryggvason by Oddr Snorrason (usually dated ca. 1190), Gunnlaugr Leifsson (written shortly after that of Oddr, and incorporated into the

19. See Axel Olrik, "Siward den digre, en vikingesaga fra de danske in Nordengland," *Arkiv för filologi* 19 (1903): 218–19, 234; *Chronicle of John of Worcester*, ed. R. R. Darlington et al., 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 2:548–49; Eric Christiansen, trans., *Saxo Grammaticus: Danorum regum heroumque historia, Books X–XVI*, 3 vols. (Oxford: B.A.R., 1980–81), 1:28–30 and 189–91. For the Latin text, I rely on *Gesta Danorum*, ed. Jørgen Olrik and Hans Ræder, 2 vols. (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1931–57).

20. See Gustav Storm, ed., *Monumenta Historica Norvegiæ: Latinske kildeskrifter til Noregs historie i middelalderen* (Kristiania [Oslo]: Brøgger, 1880), 24 and 68–71. Translated as Theodoricus Monachus, *The Ancient History of the Norwegian Kings*, trans. David and Ian McDougall, Viking Society for Northern Research Text Series 9 (London: University College London, 1998), 18, lines 12–18 (ch. 14) and 74n112.

anonymous *Longest Saga of Óláfr Tryggvason* in Flateyjarbók (*Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta*), a manuscript written in the last decades of the fourteenth century), and Snorri Sturluson.[21] Oddr and the *Longest Saga* give the fullest accounts, noting that Óláfr traveled to Jerusalem, and ended his days in a monastery in Greece, Syria, or Egypt sometime during the reign of Edward the Confessor in England. Indeed, the *Longest Saga* has the curious detail that Edward the Confessor used to read to his court the tale of Óláfr Tryggvason out of a book which Óláfr himself sent from Jerusalem to Edward's father Æthelred.[22]

Just as stories of Óláfr's survival were circulating, so too similar tales were being recycled about the survival of Harold Godwinson, Edward's successor. In the longest and most developed of these versions, the *Vita Haroldi*, Harold survived Hastings, after being cared for by a mysterious Saracen lady, and went on to live as a pilgrim and hermit. The tale of Harold's survival also appears in the fourteenth-century Icelandic *Játvarðar saga*, and the notion that the survival-tales of Óláfr and Harold are connected is in fact stated explicitly in Oddr Snorrason's aforementioned *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar*, as well as in *Hemings þáttr*.[23] In the case of the survival-tales of both Óláfr and Harold, however, it has been argued, most powerfully by Paul White, that the direction of borrowing is in fact from the south, and that Oddr Snorrason in

21. See *Saga Óláfs Tryggvasonar af Oddr Snorrason munk*, ed. Finnur Jónsson (Copenhagen: Gad, 1932), chs. 73(61)-75(63); *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta*, ed. Ólafur Halldórsson, Editiones Arnamagnæanæ A1–2 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, 1958–61), chs. 267–69, 271, 283, and 286; *Hemings þáttr Áslákssonar*, ed. Gillian Fellows-Jensen, Editiones Arnamagnæanæ B3 (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, 1962), chs. 57–58; *Heimskringla*, Bjarni Aðalbjarnason, 1:367–70 (ch. 112). See also Theodore M. Andersson, trans., *The Saga of Olaf Tryggvason by Oddr Snorrason*, Islandica 52 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 126–34.

22. See *Óláfs saga Tryggvasonar en mesta*, Ólafur Halldórsson, 349 (ch. 286).

23. See further Margaret Ashdown, "An Icelandic Account of the Survival of Harold Godwinson," in *The Anglo-Saxons: Studies in Some Aspects of their History and Culture*, ed. Peter Clemoes (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1959), 122–36; Marc Cohen, "From Throndheim to Waltham to Chester: Viking and post-Viking Attitudes in the Survival Legends of Óláfr Tryggvason and Harold Godwinson," in *The Middle Ages in the North-West*, ed. Tom Scott and Pat Starkey (Oxford: Leopard's Head Press, 1995), 143–53; Alan Thacker, "The Cult of King Harold at Chester," in *The Middle Ages in the North-West*, 155–76; Gillian Fellows-Jensen, "The Myth of Harold II's Survival in the Scandinavian Sources," in *King Harold II and the Bayeux Tapestry*, ed. Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 53–64; Stephen Matthews, "The Content and Construction of the *Vita Haroldi*," in Owen-Crocker, *King Harold II*, 65–73.

particular was using one or more of the documents underlying the *Vita Haroldi*.[24] Whatever the direction of borrowing, the fact of these shared survival tales only underlines the permeability of the Old Norse and early English traditions.

Against such a fully-fledged background of apparent interchange between Anglo-Latin and Scandinavian sources, albeit with the former generally anticipating the latter sometimes by several centuries, one might turn to the extraordinary *Gesta Herwardi*, which in this context appears very much as a kind of proto-outlaw saga, considerably predating Icelandic equivalents such as *Gísla saga Súrssonar*, *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar*, *Harðar saga ok hólmverja*, and *Áns saga bogsveigis*, all of which are first witnessed in manuscripts from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[25] Just as Paul Gerhard Schmidt has described the *Gesta Herwardi* as a "historical adventure novel,"[26] so too the great Icelandic manuscript collector, Árni Magnússon (1663–1730), noted that "*Grettis saga* approaches closer to story than to history."[27] Previous discussion has certainly focused on perceived parallels between the *Gesta Herwardi* and *Grettis saga*, although the scattered nature of such scholarship has precluded a general perspective.[28] A more

24. See Paul A. White, *Non-Native Sources for the Scandinavian Kings' Sagas* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 75–78.

25. See *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar*, ed. Guðni Jónsson, Íslenzk fornrit 7 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1956); *Gísla saga Súrssonar*, in *Vestfirðinga sǫgur*, ed. Björn K. Þórólfsson and Guðni Jónsson, Íslenzk fornrit 6 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1943), 3–118; *Harðar saga*, ed. Þórhallur Vilmundarsson and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson, Íslenzk fornrit 13 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1991); *Áns saga bogsveigis*, in *Fornaldar sögur Nordrlanda*, ed. Carl Christian Rafn, 3 vols. (Copenhagen, 1829–30), 2:323–62; *Áns saga bogsveigis*, in *Fornaldar sögur Norðurlanda*, ed. Guðni Jónsson, 4 vols. (Reykjavík: Íslendingasagnaútgáfan, 1954): 2:365–403; Anthony Faulkes, ed. and trans., *Three Icelandic Outlaw Sagas* (London: Everyman, 2001); Shaun F. D. Hughes, trans., "The Saga of Án Bow-bender," in Ohlgren, *Medieval Outlaws*, 290–337. See also Gabriel Turville-Petre, "Outlawry," in *Sjötíu ritgerðir helgaðar Jakobi Benediktssyni 20 júlí 1977*, ed. Einar G. Pétursson and Jónas Kristjánsson, 2 vols. (Reykjavík: Stofnun Árna Magnússonar, 1977): 2:769–78; Shaun F. D. Hughes, "The Literary Antecedents of *Áns saga bogsveigis*," *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 9 (1976): 198–235; Jesse Byock, trans., *Grettir's Saga* (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2009), see esp. the useful Appendix, "Grettir's Journey through Outlawry," 239–48.

26. P. G. Schmidt, "Biblisches und hagiographisches Kolorit in den Gesta Herwardi," in *The Bible in the Medieval World*, ed. K. Walsh and D. Wood, Studies in Church History, Subsidia 4 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), 94–95.

27. "*Grettis saga* gengr nær fabulae en historiae." Quoted in *Sturlunga saga*, ed. Gudbrand Vigfusson, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1878), 1:111.

28. Connections between the *Gesta* and various saga-outlaws are asserted in broad

comprehensive overview of the structure of the *Gesta Herwardi* chapter by chapter, with parallels to *Grettis saga* highlighted in italics, might look as follows:[29]

A Comparison of the *Gesta Herwardi* and *Grettis saga*

Chapter	*Summary*
Preface	Sources and background
1	*Hereward as a child: has problems with his father; sent into outlawry*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, chs. 15–16]
2	*Hereward kills a giant bear*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, ch. 21]
3	*Hereward kills a bully and takes his sword*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, chs. 18–19, 40]
4	Hereward gains fame in Ireland by killing an opposing leader;
5	Hereward goes in disguise to a wedding and carries off the bride;
6	*Hereward is shipwrecked* returning from Ireland, and goes anonymously to Flanders; [cf. *Grettis saga*, ch. 17]
7	*Hereward fights incognito* in Flanders; [cf. *Grettis saga*, chs. 63, 72]
8	*Hereward defeats a famous warrior*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, chs. 21, 22, 24]
9	Hereward is beloved by a girl, and fights on her behalf;

terms by Henry Goddard Leach, *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1921), 342–50, and Joost de Lange, *The Relation and Development of English and Icelandic Outlaw-Traditions* (Haarlem: Willink, 1935), 3–32. There is also a rash of relevant doctoral dissertations, such as Pickering, "Legend of Hereward"; Richard Howard Baum, "The Medieval Outlaw: a Study in Protest" (PhD diss., University of Utah, 1972), 11–51—these pages repeat verbatim those of Maurice Keen, *The Outlaws of Medieval Legend* , 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), 9–38, originally published in 1961; Timothy Scott Jones, "Redemptive Fictions: the Contexts of Outlawry on Medieval English Chronicle and Romance" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, 1994), 97–140; Timothy J. Lundgren, "Hereward and Outlawry in Fenland Culture: A Study of Local Narrative and Tradition in Medieval England" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1996), 48–170; Bernard I. Lumpkin, "The Making of a Medieval Outlaw: Code and Community in the Robin Hood Legend, 1400–1600" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1999).

29. Chapter-numbers here refer to the forthcoming OMT edition referred to in note 5 above (numbering is identical in the edition of Meneghetti, also cited there); chapter-numbers in square brackets refer to those of *Lestorie des Engles*, Hardy, which are identical to those employed in Swanton, "The Deeds of Hereward."

Chapter	*Summary*
10 [9]	Hereward comes to a girl and is recognized by her;
11 [10]	Hereward goes to fight in Zeeland;
12 [11]	Hereward manages the Zeeland wars;
13 [12]	*Hereward gets a swift horse*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, ch. 47]
14 [12]	Hereward returns from the Zeeland wars and divides up the spoils;
15 [13]	*Hereward returns from abroad and finds his brother dead*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, ch. 47]
16 [14]	Hereward panics the local Norman inhabitants, and gathers forces;
17 [15]	Hereward is made a knight in the English fashion;
18 [16]	*Hereward attacks a man who is plotting against him*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, ch. 59]
19 [17]	Hereward returns to Flanders, and performs heroic acts;
20 [18]	*Hereward returns to England, and gathers his outlaw band*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, ch. 69]
21 [19]	*Hereward heads for an island-refuge* (Ely); is ambushed en route; [cf. *Grettis saga*, ch. 69]
22 [20]	Hereward's enemy (William) attempts to take the island (Ely), and nearly loses his entire army;
23 [21]	William's sole surviving soldier is well treated by Hereward, and returns to William with a glowing report;
24 [22]	William is minded to make peace, but is dissuaded by some of his men;
25 [23]	Hereward enters William's court disguised as a potter;
26 [24]	Hereward enters William's court disguised as a fisherman; *a witch is used to try to dislodge the besieged outlaws from the island*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, chs. 78–80]
27 [25]	Hereward is betrayed by the people of Ely, who want to make peace with the king;
28 [26]	Hereward in dire straits is forced to kill his own horse;
29 [27]	Hereward pre-empts the arrival of the Abbot of Peterborough, and plunders his church;
30 [28]	Hereward has a vision of St Peter and returns the plunder; his journey back is miraculous, with will o' the wisps and a white wolf;

Chapter	*Summary*
31 [29]	*Hereward hunts down an enemy, and corners him in a toilet*; [cf. *Grettis saga*, ch. 19]
32 [30]	Hereward's wife becomes a nun at Crowland;
33 [31]	Hereward overcomes an eminent knight in a duel;
34 [32]	Hereward goes openly to the king, and pays him homage;
35 [33]	Hereward is attacked by one of the court, jealous at his treatment;
36 [34]	Hereward is accused by Robert de Horepol and put into prison;
37 [35]	Robert de Horepol praises Hereward to the king and receives his favor.

Previous analyses have tended to consider the *Gesta Herwardi* as a somewhat broken-backed text, containing both legendary and historical elements, with the former generally held to focus on Hereward's early life and his first period of outlawry abroad (chs. 1–15 [13]), and the latter dealing mainly with the time after return to England, his second period of outlawry at home, and the revolt against the Normans (chs. 20 [18]-37 [35]).[30] The above analysis suggests rather that elements shared with *Grettis saga* are scattered throughout the text, albeit that, as we shall see, the closest parallels are found with Hereward's first period of outlawry.

The prefatory letter (*Praefatio*) is confused and confusing, but contains a number of striking features:

> NONNULLIS apud nos scire desiderantibus opera magnifici Anglorum gentis Heruuardi et inclytorum ejus, et auribus percipere magnanimitates illius ac gesta, nuper nostræ parvitati vestra insinuavit fraternitas, interrogans si aliquid in illo loco ubi degebat de tanto viro conscriptum aliquis reliquerit. De quo enim cum nos quodam in loco

30. Typical is Lumpkin, who notes that: "the biographical romance can be divided into three sections: Hereward's *enfance* and his exile from England; his leadership as an outlaw of the Saxon rebellion against the invading Normans; and his defeat and the subsequent alliance he makes with the conquering king" ("Making of a Medieval Outlaw," 35). See too Pickering: "The second half of the *Gesta* (divided into twenty-two chapters) is based on tales of the past told by countrymen around Ely" ("Legend of Hereward," 178).

audisse modicum Anglice conscriptum professi fuimus subito coegit uestra dilectio illud ad presens perquiri et mox in Latinam linguam transferri subiungens etiam et ea que a nostris audire contigerit cum quibus conuersatus est ut insignis miles magnanimiter uiuens. Quibus quidem uestris desideriis satisfacere cupientes multis in locis perquirendo manus conuertimus et penitus nichil inuenimus preter pauca et dispersa folia partim stillicidio putrefactis et abolitis et partim abscisione diuisis. Ad quod igitur dum stilus tantumdem fuisset appositus uix ex eo principium a genitoribus eius inceptum et pauca interim expressimus et nomen, uidelicet primitiua insignia preclarissimi exulis Herwardi editum Anglico stilo a Lefrico diacono eiusdem ad Brun presbiterum. Huius enim memorati presbiteri erat studium omnes actus gygantum et bellatorum ex fabulis antiquorum aut ex fideli relatione ad edificationem audiencium congregare et ob memoriam Anglie litteris commendare. In quibus uero licet non satis periti aut potius imperiti exarare deleta incognitarum litterarum ad illum locum tamen de illo usque collegimus ubi in patriam et ad paternam domum reuersus fratrem occisum inuenit; uestre prudencie rudi stilo relinquentes crudam materiam uel alicuius exercitati ingenii studio minus dialecticis et rethoricis enigmatibus compositam et ornatam. (cf. *De Gestis Herwardi*, Meneghetti, 74)

When some of us were keen to know about the exploits of the mighty Englishman Hereward and those of his famous men, and to hear with our ears of his generous deeds and doings, your brotherliness recently aided our slender means, asking if anyone had left anything in writing about such a great man in the place where he once lived. When we said that we had heard somewhere of a short account of him written in English, your generosity swiftly had it identified and soon translated into Latin, also adding those details which we heard from our own folk, with whom he spent time while living boldly as a mighty warrior. So, wishing to satisfy your keenness, we made efforts to enquire in many places, and found almost nothing beyond a few scattered leaves, which had partly rotted and decayed with damp and partly torn by a rip. So when a pen had been as much applied to it, we scarcely took anything from it beyond his birth and beginnings from his parents and a few intervening details and his name, which is to say the early famous exploits of the most outstanding outlaw Hereward, produced

> in English by Leofric the Deacon, his priest at Bourne. For it was the habit of this well-known priest to assemble all the acts of giants and warriors from the tales of old, or from some reliable source, for the enlightenment of listeners, and to set them in English writing for posterity. Although we were not familiar enough or rather unfamiliar with the alien writing to replace what was damaged, nonetheless we gathered from it that when he returned to his homeland and his father's house he found his brother slain; leaving this raw material in a rough style to your discretion or to the application of someone's trained skill to be set out and arranged with fewer complicated and puzzling passages.

The anonymous author clearly distinguishes two groups, namely his own people (characterized by first-person plural references) and those of his addressee (characterized by second-person plural references).[31] It is tempting to think of the former as English and the latter as Norman, although there is a clearly Anglo-Scandinavian slant. A reference to *uestra . . . fraternitas* (your brotherliness) seems to point to a shared monastic milieu, but one with split perspectives and different motivations for telling the tale. Leofric the Deacon of Bourne is perhaps not to be confused with Leofric of Bourne, whom the *Gesta Herwardi* names as Hereward's father, although there is a suspicion that some confusion of the term "father" (Latin *pater*, Old English *fæder*) in a secular and ecclesiastical context may have led to an unfortunate conflation. In any event, it is striking that Leofric the Deacon should feature not only at the beginning of the *Gesta*, but also in the middle and near the end. In *Gesta Herwardi*, chapter 20 [18], Leofric the Deacon is named first in the final tally of Hereward's gang, where he features as one of those who "in militia probatissimi adhuc computati sunt" (are still reckoned best proven in war), and in *Gesta Herwardi* 36 [34], he again appears as one "qui astutus semper erat in omni suo opere et stulticiam simulare loco docti et sapienter agere" (who was always smart in everything he did, able to pretend to be stupid instead of clever, and able to do that wisely).[32]

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31. See also R. M. Wilson, *The Lost Literature of Medieval England*, 2nd ed. (London: Methuen, 1970), 124–26.

32. *De Gestis Herwardi*, Meneghetti, 126 and 168.

The *Gesta Herwardi* (the title in the single manuscript is *De gestis Herwardi*—"Concerning Hereward's Deeds") is usually ascribed to one Richard of Ely, who, it is suggested, composed it at the request of Hervey, first bishop of Ely, 1107–31.[33] The *Gesta Herwardi* was certainly used as a source by the anonymous compiler of the mid-twelfth-century *Liber Eliensis*,[34] who is the first to name the then-dead Richard as its author, in a passage that introduces several chapters evidently drawing on the earlier work:

> In libro autem de ipsius gestis Herwardi, dudum a venerabili viro ac doctissimo fratre nostro beate memorie Ricardo edito, plenius descripta inveniuntur. (*Liber Eliensis*, Blake, 188)
>
> But in a book about the deeds of Hereward himself, long ago produced by that venerable and most learned man, our brother Richard of blessed memory, these things are found described more fully.

The close relationship between *Gesta Herwardi*, chapters 21–25, and the *Liber Eliensis*, book 2, chapters 104–7, is documented in detail by Pickering,[35] but it is important also to note those parts of the *Liber Eliensis* that are *not* derived directly from the *Gesta Herwardi*, especially in so far as they seem to figure Hereward as a type of Judas Maccabaeus (*Liber Eliensis*, bk. 2, ch. 102),[36] or to provide an independent account of the siege of Ely (ibid., chs. 109–11).[37]

What also seems striking is the extent to which other lore and traditions attaching to Hereward's name are also echoed in *Grettis saga*, a phenomenon that necessitates a closer look at the *Gesta Herwardi* and the other extant texts from around the same period that also discuss Hereward's deeds, some of which seem to rely

33. See further the detailed account in *Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake, Camden Third Series 92 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1962), xxxiv-xxxvi.

34. See *Liber Eliensis*, Blake, xxxvi; Janet Fairweather, trans., *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the Seventh Century to the Twelfth* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2005), 209–22.

35. See Pickering, "Legend of Hereward," 41–55; Fairweather, *Liber Eliensis*, 209–22.

36. *Liber Eliensis*, Blake, 174; Fairweather, *Liber Eliensis*, 204–6. See Lundgren, "Hereward and Outlawry," 140–44.

37. *Liber Eliensis*, Blake, 189–94; Fairweather, *Liber Eliensis*, 223–31.

on the *Gesta Herwardi* itself, and others that offer apparently independent perspectives. That Norse tales should thrive in Ely is unsurprising not only in a pre-Conquest context, given the prominent position of Ely within the Danelaw, but also and especially in an immediately post-Conquest context that involves the outlaw Hereward himself.[38] As the *Peterborough Chronicle* most fully explains, in the spring of 1070 the Danish King Svein Estrithsson (perhaps the grandson of the Earl Siward discussed above), arrived at the mouth of the Humber, and was locally expected to make a bid for the crown:

> Her se eorl Walþeof griðede wið þone cyng. þæs on lengten se cyng let hergian ealle þa mynstra þe on Englalande wæron. Þa on þam ilcan geare com Swegn cyng <of> Denmarcan into Humbran, þet landfolc comen him ongean griðedon wið hine, wændon þet he sceolde þet land ofergan. Þa comen into Elig Cristien þa densce biscop Osbearn eorl þa densca huscarles mid heom, þet englisce folc of eall þa feonlandes comen to heom, wendon þet hi sceoldon winnon eall þet land.[39]
>
> In this year Earl Waltheof made peace with the king, and at Lent the king had all the monasteries in England attacked. In the same year, King Svein came from Denmark into the Humber, and the locals came to meet him and made peace with him; they expected that he would take over the country. Then Christian the Danish bishop came to Ely, together with Earl Osbern and the Danish housecarls too, and the English folk from all the fenlands came to them; they expected that they should conquer the whole country.

The same source goes on immediately to recount the activities of "Hereward his genge" (Hereward and his gang), thereby implicitly linking Hereward to a local expectation of a Danish takeover that is twice emphasized:

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38. Notable in this context is the careful use of the *Gesta Herwardi* as a source for the Ely rebellion in Ann Williams, *The English and the Norman Conquest* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1995), 45–57.

39. *The Peterborough Chronicle 1070–1154*, ed., Cecily Clark, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 2, lines 1–7.

Þa herdon þa munecas of Burh sægen þet heora agene menn wolden hergon þone mynstre, þet wæs Hereward his genge. Þet wæs forðan þet hi herdon sæcgen þet se cyng heafde gifen þæt abbotrice an frencisce abbot, Turolde wæs gehaten. þet he wæs swiðe styrne man wæs cumen þa into Stanforde mid ealle hise frencisce menn. Þa wæs þære an cyrceweard, Yware wæs gehaten; nam þa be nihte eall þet he mihte—þet wæron Cristes bec mæsse hakeles cantelcapas reafes swilce litles hwat, swa hwat swa he mihte—ferde sona ær dæg to þone abbot Turolde, sægde him þet he sohte his griðe, cydde him hu þa utlages sceolden cumen to Burh. Þet he dyde eall be þære munece ræde. Þa sona on morgen comen ealle þa utlaga mid fela scipe woldon into þam mynstre; þa munecas wiðstoden þet hi na mihton in cumen. Þa lægdon hi fyr on forbærndon ealle þa munece huses eall þa tun buton ane huse. Þa comen hi þurh fyre in æt Bolhiðe geate, þa munecas comen heom togeanes. beaden heom grið. Ac hi na rohten na þing—geodon into þe mynstre; clumben upp to þe halge rode, namen þa þe kynehelm of ure Drihtnes heafod eall of smeate golde, namen þa þet fotspure þe wæs undernæðen his fote, þet wæs eall of read golde; clumben upp to þe stepel, brohton dune þet hæcce þe þær wæs behid, hit wæs eall of gold of seolfre. Hi namen þære twa gildene scrines ix seolferne, hi namen fiftene mycele roden, ge of golde ge of seolfre. Hi namen þære swa mycele gold seolfre swa manega gersumas on sceat on scrud on bokes swa nan man ne mæi oðer tællen—sægdon þæt hi hit dyden for ðes mynstres holdscipe. (*Peterborough Chronicle*, Clark, 2–3, lines 9–36)

Then the monks of Peterborough heard tell that their own people wanted to plunder the minster—namely Hereward and his gang—because they had heard tell that the king had given the abbacy to a French abbot called Thorold; that he was a very strict man; and that he had at that time come into Stamford with all his Frenchmen. There was a sacristan called Yware, who at night took away everything he could: testaments, cassocks, copes, and vestments, and other such small things, whatever he could; and he went just at day-break to the Abbot Thorold, and told him that he sought his protection, and let him know that those outlaws were coming to Peterborough, and that he was wholly acting on the monks' advice. Early in the morning all the outlaws came with many ships, and wanted to enter the minster;

> but the monks held them back, so that they could not come in. Then they set a fire, and burned down all the monks' houses, and the whole enclosure except one house. Then they came in through the fire at the Bolhithegate, and the monks met them, and asked them for a truce, but they paid no attention. They entered the minster, climbed up to the holy cross, took the crown from our Lord's head, all of pure gold, and took the foot-rest that was underneath his feet, which was all of red gold. They climbed up to the steeple, brought down the crozier that was hidden there, which was all of gold and silver, seized two golden shrines, and nine silver ones, and took away fifteen large crucifixes, of gold and of silver. They took from there so much gold and silver, and so many treasures, in tribute, in vestments, and in books, that no one could describe it; they said that they did it out of their devotion to the minster.

While the emphasis in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* paints Hereward and his gang as very much against the Normans as a whole and acting as one might expect Anglo-Scandinavians broadly supportive of a Danish claim, a striking feature of the *Gesta Herwardi* is that although Hereward is depicted as an implacable foe of the Normans in general, King William himself is depicted in a somewhat sympathetic light,[40] while the historical role of the Danes is wholly downplayed. Given that Hereward's family holdings would have been squarely within the Danelaw, as were Bourne and Ely, some significant Scandinavian input into any account of his life would seem likely.[41] In such a light, the fact that the only explicitly Scandinavian reference in the whole of the *Gesta Herwardi* is, as we shall see, to a Danish bear of human descent who turns out to be a potential rapist seems significant indeed.[42]

Frank Stenton describes Hereward as "a Lincolnshire thegn of moderate estate,"[43] but perhaps more significant in respect of

40. See Jones, "Redemptive Fictions," 111. Hugh M. Thomas notes that "William is always respectfully referred to as *rex*." "The *Gesta Herwardi*, the English and their Conquerors," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 21 (1998): 229.

41. See Pickering, "Legend of Hereward," 83.

42. See Lundgren, "Hereward and Outlawry," 130.

43. Frank M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 605; see David Roffe, "Hereward 'the Wake' and the Barony of Bourne: A Reassessment of a Fenland Legend," *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology* 29 (1994): 7–10.

what looks unnervingly like a Viking raid on Peterborough (albeit that the church-building itself appears to escape unscathed) is the comment by Hugh Candidus in his *Chronicle*, written between 1155 and 1175, that "Hereward himself was a man of the monks."[44] Certainly, the *Gesta Herwardi* is contained in the thirteenth-century Peterborough Cathedral MS 1, currently held at Cambridge University Library; the *Gesta* has been incorporated into one of Peterborough's most important cartularies, assembled by Robert of Swaffham, the cellarer of the Abbey, around the year 1256. Ingrid Benecke has argued that in its current form the *Gesta Herwardi* was written down between 1227 and 1250, based on references to Robert de Horepol in the final chapters, though her conclusion is not universally accepted; most commentators support the notion of an original composition between 1107–31, as discussed above.[45] An unpublished shortened version of the *Gesta* is also found in the margins of Walter of Whittlesey's continuation of Robert of Swaffham's extension of Hugh Candidus' *Chronicle*, written about 1330.[46]

In such a context, with an originally twelfth-century tale possibly based on eyewitness records and local legends (perhaps rewritten in the thirteenth century and redacted into the fourteenth), the overlap between aspects of Hereward's story and that of the Icelandic outlaw Grettir Ásmundarson seems intriguing, to say the least; the fact that such an overlap involves not only the *Gesta Herwardi* but other accounts of what can only be called the legend of Hereward makes the connection still more compelling. So, for example, like Grettir, Hereward has two periods of outlawry, at home and abroad.[47] The first is prompted by the irascible, stubborn, and ungovernable nature of them both. Grettir's troubled childhood, his extraordinary strength, and his overbearing and

44. "ipse Herewardus homo monachorum erat." *The Chronicle of Hugh Candidus*, ed. W. T. Mellows (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), 79.

45. See Ingrid Benecke, *Der Gute Outlaw* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1973), 13–21; Jones, "Redemptive Fictions," 102; Schmidt, "Biblisches und hagiographisches Kolorit," 87.

46. See Lundgren, "Hereward and Outlawry," 58; *The Chronicle of Hugh Candidus*, Mellows, xviii-xix.

47. Cf. Byock who provides a useful pair of chronologies covering both periods (*Grettir's Saga*, 239–48). See too Lumpkin, "The Making of a Medieval Outlaw," 37.

uncompromising attitude, even in games, are portrayed in detail (*Grettis* saga, chs. 4–15); the account with regard to Hereward is briefer, but nonetheless no more positive (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 1):

> sed crudelis in opere et in ludo seuerus libenter inter coetaneos commouens bella et inter maiores etate in urbibus et in uillis sepe suscitans certamina nullum sibi in ausibus et fortitudinum executionibus parem nec maiores etiam etate relinquens. (78)
>
> Yet he was rough in work and tough in play, always picking fights among his peers and often stirring up strife among his elders in towns and villages; he had no match in deeds of daring and courageous acts, not even among his elders.

Hereward is rough and tough or, literally, "cruel" and "severe" (*crudelis . . . seuerus*); his character is a problem for those closest to him. Likewise in the case of Grettir his juvenile delinquency (which includes extreme cruelty and physical violence, culminating in a killing when he is only fifteen) is attributed to paternal negligence or hostility (*Grettis saga*, ch. 14): "Ekki hafði hann ástríki mikit af Ásmundi fǫður sínum, en móðir hans unni honum mikit" (He did not have much love from Ásmundr, his father, but his mother loved him greatly).[48] Hereward too has no love from his father, who indeed is held directly responsible for his son's first period of outlawry (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 1):

> Qua de re pater eius a rege Edwardo impetrauit ut exul a patria fieret patefactis omnibus quecunque in patrem et contra parentes uel que contra prouinciales egerat. Et factum est. Vnde statim agnomen exulis adeptus est in decimo octauo etatis anno a patre et patria expulsus. (80)
>
> And for that reason his father, after describing all that he had done against his father, and his parents, and the local folk, asked King

48. *Grettis saga*, Guðni Jónsson, 36. Note that practically the same thing is also said of the outlaw Án bow-bender: "Lítit ástríki hafði hann af feðr sínum, en móðir hans unni honum mikit" (Guðni Jónsson, *Fornaldar sögur*, 2:368). See Lange, *English and Icelandic Outlaw-Traditions*, 115.

> Edward that he be banished from his homeland. And so it happened. Because of that he was at once called "Outlaw," since he was cast out from his father and his homeland when he was eighteen.

This passage is remarkable for the intensity of alliteration on "p" (*pater . . . impetrauit . . . patria . . . patefactis . . . patrem . . . parentes . . . prouinciales . . . patre . . . patria*), emphatically highlighting the role of Hereward's own father in the imposition of his outlawry, a political weapon Edward the Confessor seems to have used more than his predecessors.[49]

Hereward's first adventure after being condemned to outlawry occurs at the court of Giseberht de Ghent in Northumberland. His host has a custom at various festivals of testing young men by pitting them against wild beasts (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 2):[50]

> Cum quibus Herwardus in primordio sui aduentus, uidelicet in Natale Domini, associatus rogauit sibi unum e feris aggredi licere aut saltim illum maximum ursum qui aderat; quem incliti ursi Norweye fuisse filium ac formatum secundum pedes illius et capud ad fabulam Danorum affirmabant sensum humanum habentem et loquelam hominis intelligentem ac doctum ad bellum; cuius igitur pater in siluis fertur puellam rapuisse et ex ea Biernum regem Norweye genuisse. (80)

> Hereward was with them at the start of his visit, around Christmas, and since he was there he asked to be allowed to take on one of the wild animals, specifically the enormous bear that was there, and according to Danish legend was supposed to be the son of famous Norwegian bear with a human head and feet as well as human intelligence, one who understood the speech of men and was trained for battle. Its own father was said to have raped a girl in the forest and with her to have fathered King Beorn ["Bear"] of Norway.

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49. See Frank Barlow, *Edward the Confessor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 80. In the context of Hereward's family background, it seems relevant to mention a further curious document, *Excerptum de familia Herwardi* (Excerpt Concerning the Family of Hereward) in J. A. Giles, ed., *Vita* [*sic*] *Quorundam Anglo-Saxonum: Original Lives of Anglo-Saxons and Others who Lived before the Conquest* (London: 1854), 31–33.

50. See Jones, "Redemptive Fictions," 126–28.

This bear is evidently related to the one mentioned above in the *Gesta antecessorum* section of the *Vita Waldeui*. Hereward is initially refused the conflict, but when the bear escapes and goes on a rampage, he encounters it on his own. The key moment of Hereward's meeting with the bear reads as follows (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 2):

> Interim Herwardus feram cruentatam ad thalamum domini sui propter voces trepidantium revertentem, ubi uxor illius et filiæ ac mulieres timide confugerant, obvium habuit, ac in illum confestim irruere voluit; ipsum iste prævenit, gladium per caput et ad scapulas usque configens, atque ibi spatam relinquens, bestiam in ulnis accepit, et ad insequentes tetendit. Quo viso plurimum mirati sunt. (Ibid.)

> In the meantime, Hereward came upon the blood-spattered wild animal as it was heading back to the lord's bedroom because of the screaming of the scared, where the lord's wife and daughters and the women had fled in fear, and the bear wanted to attack him at once, but he beat it to it, slicing his sword through its head right up to the shoulder-blades, and leaving the blade there, while he lifted up the beast in his arms and held it out to those who came after him; and they were completely astonished at the sight.

Quite what the bear is doing heading towards the lord's bed-chamber, where the womenfolk were, is unclear, but the potential for bestial rape, apparently a trait to which the beast's breeding has predisposed it, seems very clear.

Such a combat characterizes the figure found widely elsewhere of an irascible and anti-social young man who makes a name for himself as a monster-slayer, but who also has to exist outside the norms of human society, a tale-type known as "the bear's son's tale."[51] Examples include *Beowulf*, *Grettis saga*, and above all the accounts of the hero Bǫðvarr Bjarki (his nickname means

51. See especially Oscar L. Olson, *The Relation of the Hrólfs Saga Kraka and the Bjarkarímur to Beowulf* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1916); J. Michael Stitt, *"Beowulf" and the Bear's Son: Epic, Saga, and Fairytale in Northern Germanic Tradition*, Albert Bates Lord Studies in Oral Tradition 8 (New York: Garland, 1992); Jesse L. Byock, trans., *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki* (London: Penguin, 1998), xxv–xxviii.

"little bear"), as it features in Scandinavian sources in *Hrólfs saga kraka*,[52] as well as in the *Gesta Danorum* of Saxo Grammaticus.[53] The fact that Bǫðvarr Bjarki's fame spread to England is confirmed rather strikingly by the appearance of one *Boduwar Berki* in the Durham *Liber Vitae*.[54] The same book also contains the name *Biuulf*, likely a reflection of another hero, Beowulf, who is also often identified as part of the same "bear's son" motif.[55] The former entry has been dated to the beginning of the twelfth century, with the latter to the beginning of the ninth. Pickering makes eight points of comparison between the tale of Bǫðvarr Bjarki and the *Gesta Herwardi*:[56]

1. An untried youth arrives from abroad at the court of an important lord;
2. A fierce beast is at the court, that tests the mettle of young warriors there;
3. The contest takes place at Christmas or Yuletide;
4. The young hero is forbidden from fighting the beast;
5. The beast in question is a white bear (*Gesta Herewardi*) or a bear of unspecified color (*Gesta Danorum*);
6. The young hero meets the bear in unexpected circumstances requiring single-handed action;
7. The young hero slays the bear with a single sword-stroke;
8. The young hero gains fame and respect from the deed.

In the case of the respect that Hereward gains from killing the bear, it is again striking that he is celebrated first and foremost by the local ladies (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 2):

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52. See Guðni Jónsson, ed., *Fornaldar sögur Norðurlanda*, 4 vols. (Reykjavík: Íslendingasagnaútgáfan, 1954), 1:55–69; Byock, *Saga of King Hrolf Kraki*, 43–52.

53. See *Gesta Danorum*, Olrik, 51–61; Saxo Grammaticus, *The History of the Danes, Books I–IX*, ed. and trans., Hilda Ellis Davidson and Peter Fisher, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Brewer, 1979–80), 1:54–63, 2:47–49.

54. See R. D. Fulk et al., eds., *Klaeber's "Beowulf" and "The Fight at Finnsburg,"* 4th ed. (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2008), xlii.

55. *The Durham Liber vitae: London, British Library, MS Cotton Domitian A. VII*, ed. David and Lynda Rollason, 3 vols. and CD-ROM (London: British Library, 2007): 2:11, 94, 218.

56. See Pickering, "Legend of Hereward," 94–97.

> Qua de re prouinciales eum in laudibus preferebant et mulieres ac puelle de eo in choris canebant. (82)
>
> And in that regard, the locals began to shower him with praise, and women and young girls began to sing about him in their songs.

The passage echoes the biblical 1 Samuel 18:7–9, where the women of Israel inspire Saul's jealousy by singing that Saul has killed thousands but David tens of thousands; likewise, just as David's fame incites resentment in Saul, who tries to kill him with a javelin, so too Hereward is immediately attacked by a jealous assailant with a javelin (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 2):[57]

> Hoc autem Herwardo per seruum suum pene tarde comperto in ictu iaculi lancea inuasorem suum transfodit. Hiis igitur domine sue patefactis et tantas denique insidias declinans discessit. At illa lacrimans et multum deprecans ut saltim suum expectaret dominum aut filii sui languentis exitum; si non euaderet ipse adoptiuus filius heres illorum fieret. Quod impetrare non potuit. (Ibid.)
>
> But when he learned of this plot at the last moment from his servant, Hereward speared his attacker just as he was trying to throw a javelin. When he described this to his lady, he departed, to escape such schemes. In tears, she kept on asking that he would at least wait either for her lord to return or for the death of their ailing son; if he didn't leave, he could become their adopted son and heir. But she couldn't sway him.

The unfulfilled request from the lady of the house to wait for the return of the absent lord, and Hereward's blunt and abrupt departure find several parallels in Old Norse-Icelandic literature, notably in *Grettis saga*, which, as we shall see, also has an account of its own outlaw hero slaying a vicious bear at another's home.

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57. See Elisabeth van Houts, "Hereward and Flanders," *Anglo-Saxon England* 28 (1999): 217; Schmidt, "Biblisches und hagiographisches Kolorit," 91–92; Jones, "Redemptive Fictions," 129. Van Houts gives the fullest account of Hereward's expeditions to Flanders, highlighting the historical aspects of this part of the *Gesta*, including the fame and availability of fine horses from the area, as well as the fact that a charter of Bishop Lietbert of Cambrai (1051–76), dated to early 1065, is witnessed by one *miles Herivvardi* ("Hereward and Flanders," 201–23, esp. 209 and 210–13).

The parallel sequence of the bear-slaying in *Grettis saga*, however, while it removes entirely the sexual element underpinning the equivalent passage in *Gesta Herwardi*, adds other details (*Grettis saga*, ch. 21).[58] At this point in his outlawry, Grettir has already left his home in Iceland and traveled to Norway, where after several adventures he has arrived at the home of one Þorkell at Sálfti in Hálogaland. While he is warmly received by his host, there is another less welcoming guest, a distant relative of Þorkell's named Bjǫrn ("bear"), who is both brash and loud, and prone to provoke Grettir. When a wild bear breaks out of its cave and causes great damage, there are two attempts to kill it by Þorkell and Bjǫrn and others, both of which are failures. Then Grettir makes an attempt on his own (*Grettis saga*, ch. 21):

> Hann gekk þegar í einstigit, ok er dýrit sá manninn, hljóp þat upp með grimmð mikilli ok í móti Gretti ok laust til hans með hramminum, þeim er firr var berginu. Grettir hjó í móti með sverðinu, ok kom á hramminn fyrir ofan klœrnar ok tók þar af. Þá vildi dýrit ljósta með þeim fœtinum sem heill var, skauzk á stúfinn, ok varð hann lægri en hann ætlaði, ok fell þá dýrit í fang Gretti. Hann þrífr þá meðal hlusta dýrinu ok helt því frá sér, svá at þat náði eigi at bíta hann. Svá hefir Grettir sagt, at hann þóttist þá aflraun mesta gǫrt hafa, at halda dýrinu. En með því at dýrit brauzk um fast, en rúmit lítit, þá ruku þeir báðir ofan fyrir bjargit. Nú var dýrit þyngra, ok kom þat fyrr niðr á urðina; varð Grettir þá efri, en dýrit lamðisk þá mjǫk þeim megin, sem niðr vissi. Grettir þrífr þá til saxins ok lagði bjǫrninn til hjartans, ok var þat hans bani; eptir þat fór hann heim ok tók feld sinn, ok var hann allr rifinn í sundr. Hann hafði með sér þat, er hann hafði hǫggvit af hramminum. (*Grettis saga*, Guðni Jónsson, 76–77)

> He went straight along the narrow path, and when the bear saw him, it ran at him ferociously and lashed at him with the paw that was farther away from the cliff. Grettir struck with his sword, hit the paw above the claws and chopped it off. Then the bear tried to strike him with its good paw, and shifted its weight to the stump; but because that paw was shorter than it had expected, the bear toppled into Grettir's

58. Guðni Jónsson, 73–78.

> arms. Grettir grabbed the bear by the ears and held it at arm's length to prevent it from biting him. He said later that holding off that bear was his greatest feat of strength. Because the bear thrashed about and the path was so narrow, they both toppled over the edge of the cliff. The bear was heavier than Grettir, so it hit the boulders first, with him on top of it, and was badly injured by the fall. Grettir grabbed his short-sword, drove it through the bear's heart and killed it. Then he went home, taking his cloak with him, which was ripped to shreds. He also took the piece of the paw that he had cut off.

Note that this episode in *Grettis saga*, which takes place early in winter, complies with seven of the eight points of comparison between and the tales of tale of Bǫðvarr Bjarki and the *Gesta Herwardi* made by Pickering above. The detail of keeping the beast at arms' length links the feats of both Grettir and Hereward, and strengthens the general sense of similarity. Moreover, just as Hereward is celebrated for his bear-slaying, so earning the jealousy of another warrior whom he kills trying to attack him, so too Grettir ends up killing Bǫrn, who had so provoked him during his stay (*Grettis saga*, ch. 22). Nor is Bjǫrn the only human enemy of Grettir's to be associated with bears, nor indeed with the whole bear-slaying episode in the *Gesta Herwardi*.

The sexual element absent in the account of Grettir and the bear (although it is certainly implied in the parallel account in the *Gesta Herwardi*) is, however, much to the fore in the account of Grettir's dealings with berserks during the first period of his outlawry; the berserks, who as a type are of course implicitly and customarily identified with bears,[59] are described as follows (*Grettis saga*, ch. 19):

> Þeir gengu berserksgang ok eirðu engu, þegar þeir reiddusk. Þeir tóku á brott konur manna ok dœtr ok hǫfðu við hǫnd sér viku eða hálfan mánuð ok fœrðu síðan aptr þeim, sem áttu; þeir ræntu, hvar sem þeir kómu, eða gerðu aðrar óspekðir. (Ibid., 62)

59. See especially Gerard Breen, "Personal Names and the Re-creations of *berserkir* and *úlfheðnar*," *Studia Anthroponymica Scandinavica* 15 (1997): 5–38.

> They went berserk and spared no one, when their blood was up. They took away men's wives and daughters, and kept them for a week or two, and then sent them back to their husbands and fathers; they plundered wherever they went, and did other wicked deeds.

An immediate Anglo-Saxon analogue for such peremptory sexual appropriation can be found in the C-text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 1046, where Earl Swein Godwinson, the brother of Harold and Tostig, blots his own copy-book in a similarly shocking fashion:

> Her on þysum geare for Swegn eorl into Wealan Griffin se norþerna cyng forð mid him, him man gislode. Þa he hamwerdes wæs, þa het he feccan him to þa abbedessan on Leomynstre hæfde hi þa while þe him geliste let hi syþþan faran ham.[60]

> In this year Earl Swein went into Wales, and Grufydd the Northern king went with him, and hostages were given them. When he was on his way home, he had the abbess of Leominster brought to him, and kept her with him as long as he liked, and then let her go home.

Such sexual predators are commonplace in the Icelandic sagas; an evidently parallel episode, again taking place at Christmas (Yuletide) happens later in *Grettis saga*, ch. 40:

> At jólum kom Grettir til þess bónda, er Einarr hét. Hann var ríkr maðr ok kvæntr ok átti dóttur gjafvaxta, er Gýríðr er nefnd; hon var fríð kona ok þótti harðla góðr kostr. Einarr bauð Gretti með sér at vera um jólin, ok þat þá hann. Þat var þá víða í Noregi, at markarmenn ok illvirkjar hljópu ofan af mǫrkum ok skoruðu á menn til kvenna eða tóku á brott fé manna með ofríki, þar sem eigi var liðsfjǫlði fyrir. Svá bar hér til, at þat var einn dag á jólunum, at kómu til Einars bónda illvirkjar margir saman. Hét sá Snækollr, sem fyrir þeim var; hann var berserkr mikill. Hann skoraði á Einar bónda, at hann skyldi leggja upp við hann dóttur sína eða verja hana, ef hann þœttisk maðr til; en bóndi var þá af œskuskeiði ok engi styrjaldarmaðr. (*Grettis saga*, Guðni Jónnsson, 135)

60. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 5: MS. C*, ed. Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe (Cambridge: Brewer, 2001), *s.a.* 1046.

> At Christmas, Grettir came to the house of a farmer called Einarr. He was a rich man, married, and had a daughter of marriageable age, who was called Gýríðr; she was a beautiful woman, and was thought a good match. Einarr asked Grettir to stay with him over Christmas. It happened then widely in Norway, that outlaws and mischief-makers came suddenly out of the woods and challenged men for their womenfolk and took away men's property with overbearing force, wherever there were few folk around. So it happened one day at Christmas that many mischief-makers came together at farmer Einarr's. Their leader was called Snækoll; he was a mighty berserk. He challenged farmer Einarr, that he should either hand over his daughter or defend her, if he thought he was man enough; but the farmer was past his prime, and was not a fighter.

Grettir steps in, kicks the berserk's shield up into his jaw, and finally decapitates him. In such ways does Grettir establish himself as a defender of women against unwanted male aggression, in a fashion not unlike Hereward.

In the case of the first description of the berserks in *Grettis saga* (ch. 19), these sexual predators come to the home of Þorfinnr Kársson inn gamli at Háramarsey, where Grettir has been staying and has already made a name for himself, while Þorfinnr and most of the men are away, leaving Grettir and eight other men together with Þorfinnr's wife and daughter and the other women of the household. The twelve berserks in question arrive at Yuletide and make it clear that they intend to rape the women. Grettir tricks and eventually traps the berserks in a storehouse adjoining a toilet, a humiliating position from which they attempt to extricate themselves by breaking through the partition wall and exiting via the toilet.[61] When the leader of berserks first emerges, Grettir spears him dead, and eventually kills ten of the twelve berserks himself; two more perish of cold while attempting to escape. Given the odd detail of a trapped enemy holed up in a toilet, it is striking that Hereward too hounds an enemy into a similarly humiliating situation (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 31):

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61. There is a useful illustration of the relative layout of the buildings in Byock, *Grettir's Saga*, 54.

> Et cum non haberet ibi ubi se uerteret imminente semper super eum Herwardo in interiorem domum fugiens discessit ubi in foramine selle super latrinam capud imposuit misereri sibi exorans. (160)
>
> And since he did not have anywhere to turn, with Hereward always so hard on his heels, he left the building in flight to where he placed his head through the hole in a toilet-seat and begged for mercy.

Likewise, *Gesta Herwardi* (ch. 3) relates the story of Hereward's conflict with a bully called Ulcus Ferreus ("Iron Sore"), whom he encounters at the court of a Cornish prince called Alef. One wonders whether the villain's first name *Ulcus* masks an original *Ulfus* ("wolf") or even *Ursus* ("bear"): both "Iron Wolf" and "Iron Bear" would be very suitable names for a berserk.[62] At all events, this character certainly behaves like a berserk, being described as "unum nephandissimum uirum et ualde superbum" (one of the most wicked men, and extremely arrogant), and "promereri sibi jam diu expectans ob fortitudinum merita reguli pulcherrimam filiam" (for a long time expecting to earn for himself the very beautiful daughter of the prince through his mighty strength).[63] Part of this bully's swaggering is the boast that he has killed numerous opponents; Hereward's answer drips with cool contempt (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 3):[64]

> "Quoniam illos uiros quos a te dicis interfectos in mente tua concepisti et ex corde tuo illos non a matre natos genuisti dignum est ut uno ictu oris interfecti sint." (84)
>
> Since those men you say you slew you made up in your own mind, and they came from your heart and not from any mother, it's only right that they should be slain by a single breath out of your mouth!

Inevitably, and following the same pattern described above, Hereward encounters the bully in single combat, and initially pierces his enemy

62. See Breen on names relating to iron ("Personal Names," esp. 25).

63. *De Gestis Herwardi*, Meneghetti, 82.

64. "This is just the sort of retort that gets saga outlaws such as Egill Skallagrímsson and Gunnlaugr ormstunga into trouble" (Jones, "Redemptive Fictions," 130).

through the thigh with his javelin, while his wounded foe bemoans the lack of his favored weapon, which he had earlier apparently given to the prince's daughter (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 3):

> "O utinam spata pre manibus quam sero mee sponse future tradidi unde tantos oppressi mihi adesset uno ictu semianimis saltim uindicaturus quam a quodam tyranno dimicando accepi." (84–86)
>
> If only I had in my hand the blade I just handed over to my future wife and with which I fought such great men, that I won in battle with a bully; I would, even though half-dead, avenge myself with a single blow.

That very blade, we infer, causes his own death with a single blow, while the favor of the prince's daughter toward Hereward is made explicit after he has killed the bully, even though in so doing he is detained by her disapproving father (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 3):

> Filia uero eius in euentu ualde exilarata formidolosum hominem et incompositum membris quoniam nimium uerita est Herwardo plurimum prouide in custodia ministrauit et in fine datis muneribus ac predicto ense sibi tradito clam decedere fecit rogans inmemor sui ne fieret. (86)
>
> Indeed, [the prince's] daughter was utterly delighted by the outcome, since she was very much afraid of that terrifying man misshapen in his limbs, and took the greatest care of Hereward while he was detained; eventually, having showered him with gifts, including giving him the aforementioned sword, she caused him to leave in secret, begging him not to forget her.

The ugliness of berserks is a byword, although the Latin phrase in question (*incompositum membris*) might equally refer to other kinds of deformity also associated with their kind.[65] The fact that Hereward also acquires an apparently special weapon once owned by his inhuman enemy can likewise be matched in cognate tales.[66]

65. See Breen, "Personal Names," 25–27.

66. See Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies*, 144–47.

In this context, there is again a parallel with a pair of episodes involving Biarco (Bǫðvarr Bjarki) in Saxo's *Gesta Danorum*.[67] In the first of these incidents, Biarco retaliates against the boisterous activity that occurs at the wedding of one Agner, son of Ingel, to Ruta, the sister of King Rolf (Hrólfr kraki). Agner, affronted, challenges Biarco to a duel, at the climax of which he is fatally wounded through the midriff. In the second incident, already mentioned above, Biarco confronts a huge bear, which, as in the analogues, he spears to death:

> Talibus operum meritis exsultanti novam de se silvestris fera victoriam praebuit. Ursum quippe eximiae magnitudinis obvium sibi inter dumeta factum iaculo confecit comitemque suum Hialtonem, quo viribus maior evaderet, applicato ore egestum beluae cruorem haurire iussit. Creditum namque erat hoc potionis genere corporei roboris incrementa praestari. (*Gesta Danorum*, Olrik, 51)

> While he was rejoicing in such prizes for his deeds, a wild beast from the forest provided him with a fresh victory. For he came upon a certain bear of an enormous size among the thickets and pierced it with a spear, and ordered his companion Hjalto to put his mouth to the wound and suck out the blood, because it was believed that an increase of bodily strength would be provided by this kind of drink.

Certainly, however, both Grettir and Hereward are unafraid of standing up to bullies and provoking their wrath. The relevant episodes involve a young man, already with a certain reputation for stubborn pugnacity, who is thrown into a foreign situation where as a recent arrival he is provoked by a bully who has designs on the lady of the house, but where he nonetheless manages not only to kill the bully with a sword-stroke, but also gain the favor of the lady and the esteem of the lord. Further schematic comparisons between (for example) the tales of Bǫðvarr Bjarki, as told in both Saxo's *Gesta Danorum* and *Hrólfs saga kraka* (where twelve berserks turn up to wreak havoc at Yuletide),[68] and that of Hereward in the *Gesta*

67. *Gesta Danorum*, Olrik, 51–61; Davidson, *History of the Danes*, 1:54–63 and 2:47–49.

68. *Hrólfs saga kraka*, Guðni Jónsson, 69–72; Byock, *Saga of King Hrolf Kraki*, 53–55.

Herwardi develop the points of contact, but the story remains essentially the same.[69]

Gerd Sieg has considered a whole series of such episodes spread throughout a range of sagas, in which a berserk demands the wife, daughter, or sister of a man of significant status, on penalty of a duel with that man or his representative, knowing full well that he cannot be killed by ordinary weapons, and is then surprised when the hero confronts him properly armed (often with the bully's own weapon), and then generally manages to lop off a limb before dispatching his victim.[70] Benjamin Blaney expands the paradigm dramatically, and notes no fewer than thirty-three examples from various sagas, including that from *Grettis saga*.[71] In any case, the wider tale-type, including Latin examples from both the *Gesta Danorum* and *Gesta Herwardi*, seems clear.

Other minor parallels link the *Gesta Herwardi* more specifically with *Grettis saga*, albeit that the routes of transmission remain opaque. So, for example, in one of the odder episodes in the *Gesta Herwardi*, our eponymous hero behaves rather badly, escaping the king's custody while the king is out hunting and killing a boy who bad-mouths him on his way (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 26):

> Quo ascenso quidam de pueris regis uiso illo uocibus maledicis eum aggressus est monens sociis ut eum a ministris regis sequi repente facerent elapsum eum a uinculis asserens. Cuius obiurgantis uerba Herwardus non ferens cum autem illum contra seipsum offenderet gladio eum transuerberauit. (146)

> When he had mounted [the horse], one of the king's lads spotted him and insulted him with foul language, telling his mates to chase him straightaway with the King's servants, crying out that he had slipped his chains. Hereward could not bear his inflammatory words, and when the boy got in his way, he struck him through with his sword.

69. See Pickering, "Legend of Hereward," 113–17.

70. See Gerd Sieg, "Die Zweikämpfe der Isländersagas," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum* 95 (1966): 1–27; Jones, "Redemptive Fictions," 131.

71. See Benjamin Blaney, "The Berserk Suitor: the Literary Application of a Stereotyped Theme," *Scandinavian Studies* 54 (1982): 279–94; see also Blaney, "The *berserkr*: His Origin and Development in Old Norse Literature" (PhD diss., University of Colorado, 1972), esp. 140–73.

The parallel episode in *Grettis saga* takes place at a church, and again the king, this time Óláfr Haraldsson (995–1030) is close by, but not present to witness the provocation and its deadly outcome (*Grettis saga*, ch. 39):

> Þá hljóp fram piltr einn frumvaxta, heldr svipligr, ok mælti til Grettis: "Undarlegr háttr er nú hér í landi þessu, þar sem menn skulu kristnir heita, at illvirkjar ok ránsmenn ok þjófar skulu fara í friði ok gera þeim skírslur; en hvat myndi illmenninu fyrir verða, nema forða lífinu meðan hann mætti? Hér er nú einn ódáðamaðrinn, er sannreyndr er at illvirkjum ok hefir brennt inni saklausa menn, ok skal hann þó enn ná undanfœrslu, ok er þetta allmikill ósiðr." Hann fór at Gretti ok rétti honum fingr ok skar honum hǫfuð ok kallaði hann margýgjuson ok mǫrgum ǫðrum illum nǫfnum. Gretti varð skapfátt mjǫk við þetta, ok gat þá eigi stǫðvat sik. Grettir reiddi þá upp hnefann ok sló piltinn undir eyrat, svá at hann lá þegar í óviti, en sumir segja, at hann væri dauðr þá þegar. En engi þóttist vita, hvaðan sjá piltr kom, eða hvat af honum varð, en þat ætla menn helzt, at þat hafi verit óhreinn andi, sendr til óheilla Gretti. (*Grettis saga*, Guðni Jónsson, 133)

> Then a young lad leapt out, rather out of the blue, and spoke to Grettir: "It is an odd practice here in this country, where folk call themselves Christians, that criminals and robbers and thieves should be allowed to pass in peace and undertake ordeals: and what is a scoundrel to do but lengthen his life while he can? Here is a man of wicked deeds, who has been rightly convicted of crimes and has burnt innocent men inside a house, and yet is given the right to ordeal, and that is a huge scandal." He went up to Grettir and pointed his fingers at him and made faces and called him the son of a sea hag and many other bad names. Grettir totally lost it at that and could not control himself. Grettir raised up his fist and punched the lad under the ear, so that he was immediately knocked out flat unconscious, and some say that he immediately died. But no one could tell where the lad came from, or what became of him, and folk think is most likely, that he was an unclean spirit sent to damn Grettir.

Here the surprise appearance of the boy is given a rather otherworldly slant if, as has been suggested, the phrase "unclean spirit" (*óhreinn*

andi) is intended to evoke the "unclean spirit" (*spiritus immundus*) who cries out against Jesus in the synagogue at Capernaum in the Vulgate (Mark 1:23–26).[72] Nonetheless Hereward and Grettir, in a pair of curiously similar episodes, are clearly guilty of assaulting and even killing a child, albeit after verbal provocation.

Similarly, several earlier scholars have noted the parallels that exist between the account of Hereward's retreat to the Isle of Ely in the *Gesta Herewardi* (ch. 22) and that of Grettir to the island Drangey in *Grettis saga* (ch. 69).[73] In the case of both outlaws, attempts are made to dislodge them by witchcraft, after all other means fail; the story in *Grettis saga* (chs. 78–79) involves the witch Þuríðr, the foster-mother of Grettir's arch-enemy Þorbjǫrn ǫngull, while that in *Gesta Herwardi* focuses on an unnamed witch who is brought in by William de Warenne, his own nemesis. In the Norse, Þuríðr bewitches a log and sends it to Drangey, where it causes Grettir to wound himself; in the Latin, the witch's behavior is rather more eye-popping (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 26):

> In octaua siquidem die cum omni uirtute eorum omnes aggressi sunt impugnare insulam statuentes illam predictam phitonissam mulierem in eminentiori loco in medio eorum ut satis undique munita libere sue arti uacaret. Qua ascensa contra insulam et habitatores eius diu sermocinata est, plurimas destructionis similitudines et figmenta subuersionis faciens posterioraque sua semper in fine sue orationis et incantationis detecta ostendens. (148)

> And then on the eighth day they all set out to attack with all their might, setting the aforementioned witch in a raised position in their midst, so that while she was properly protected on all sides so she might have every chance to practice her art. When she had been lifted up, she spoke out against the Isle and its inhabitants for a long time, setting up a whole stack of curses, images, and instruments of their demise, and showing her naked arse at them when her speeches and spells were over.

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72. See Robert Cook, "The Reader in *Grettis saga*," *Saga-Book of the Viking Society* 21 (1984–85): 151; Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies*, 154.

73. See Jones, "Redemptive Fictions," 134–40.

While *Grettis saga* has no such stirring scene, the activities of the witch here can be closely matched in Norse sources. *Landnámabók* (The Book of Settlements), an early form of which is attributed to Ari Þorgilsson (1068–1148), but which in its current form seems to date from the late thirteenth century, lists accounts of more than four hundred settlers and their descendents into the twelfth century and tells briefly the story of the rather unpleasant Hrolleifr, and his still more unpleasant mother Ljót (whose name means "ugly": the masculine form of the name is also attested for berserks).[74] In a dispute with neighbors, she acts as follows (*Sturlubók*, ch. 180):

> Þá var Ljót út komin ok gekk ǫfug: hon hafði hǫfuðit millum fóta sér, en klæðin á baki sér.[75]
>
> Then Ljót came out, and walked backwards; she had her head between her legs, and her clothes over her head.

The scene is filled out still further in the fourteenth-century *Vatnsdœla saga* (ch. 26):

> Ok er þeir bræðr kómu at, mælti Hǫgni: "Hvat fjánda ferr hér at oss, er ek veit eigi hvat er?" Þorsteinn svarar: "Þar ferr Ljót kerling ok hefir breytilega um búizk;" hon hafði rekit fǫtin fram yfir hǫfuð sér ok fór ǫfug ok rétti hǫfuðit aptr milli fótanna; ófagrligt var hennar augnabragð, hversu hon gat þeim trollsliga skotit.[76]
>
> When the brothers approached, Hǫgni said: "What fiend is that coming towards us here? I do not know what it is." Þorsteinn replied: "That is Ljót the old witch, and she has made herself up strangely." She had pulled her clothes up over her head and was walking backwards, with her head shoved back between her legs. The look in her eyes was awful, since she could dart them about like a troll.

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74. See Breen, "Personal Names," 25–27.

75. *Íslendingabók, Landnámabók*, ed. Jakob Benediktsson, Íslenzk fornrit 1 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1986), 222.

76. *Vatnsdœla saga*, ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson, Íslenzk fornrit 8 (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornritafélag, 1939), 69–70.

In both the *Gesta Herwardi* and *Grettis saga*, the object of this magical behavior is to bring fate upon the heads of the respective heroes; in both cases, the rituals do indeed dislodge the intended outlaws, but with differing degrees of damage.

It is striking that while Grettir never lives to leave his island-refuge, Hereward does indeed escape to fight another day, and that the *Gesta Herwardi* ends with the outlaw fully reconciled with the king.[77] Other accounts do, however, describe the manner of Hereward's death in ways which look strikingly similar to what is found in *Grettis saga*. Of these, the so-called *Liber de Hyda* (ca. 1120–35, perhaps written at Lewes) has the following account:

> Post multas denique cædes atque seditiones, multa pacis fœdera cum rege facta et temerarie violata, quadam die cum omnibus sociis ab hostibus circumventus miserabiliter occubuit.[78]
>
> Finally, after many killings and treacherous attacks, many pacts of peace made with the king and rashly broken, one day when he was with all of his companions surrounded by his enemies, he died a wretched death.

This sparse description is considerably expanded in another source, the *L'Estorie des Engles* by the Anglo-Norman chronicler, Geffrei Gaimar, written in 1136–37, and comprising some 6500 lines of verse, of which the account of Hereward takes up 253 lines (5457–5710).[79] Gaimar's accounts of Hereward are "quite independent of the *Gesta*,"[80] and the death scene of Hereward is vividly described, from the moment

77. See further Rolf H. Bremmer, Jr, "The *Gesta Herwardi*: Transforming an Anglo-Saxon into an Englishman," in *People and Texts: Relationships in Medieval Literature*, ed. T. Summerfield and K. Busby (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 29–42.

78. *Chronica Monasterii de Hida juxta Wintoniam, ab Anno 1035 ad Annum 1121*, in Appendix A of *Liber Monasterii de Hyda*, ed. Edward Edwards, Rolls Series 45 (London: Longmans, 1866), 295; see Lundgren, "Hereward and Outlawry," 164–66.

79. *Lestorie des Engles solum la translacion Maistre Geffrei Gaimar*, ed. Thomas D. Hardy and Charles T. Martin, Rolls Series 91, 2 vols. (London: HMSO 1898–99; Kraus reprints, 1966), 1:339–404; cf. *L'Estorie des Engleis by Geffrei Gaimar*, ed. Alexander Bell, Anglo-Norman Texts 14–16 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1960). See Pickering, "Legend of Hereward," 65. For the date, see Ian Short, "Gaimar's Epilogue and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Liber vetustissimus*," *Speculum* 79 (1994): 323–43.

80. *Lestorie Des Engles*, Hardy, xxxiv.

he is taken unawares when one of his companions lets him down, but another makes up for it by a stout defense:

> Si Hereward en fust guarni,
> Le plus haardi semblast cuard.
> Malement lagueitat Ailward,
> Son chapelein; le dust guaiter,
> Si sendormi sur vn rocher.
> Ke dirraie? suspris i fust;
> Meis gentement sen est contenuz,
> Si se content com vn leun,
> Il e Winter son compaignun. (lines 5618–26)

> If Hereward had been warned / The bravest would have appeared a coward. / Ailward watched him ill / His chaplain. He should have watched, / But fell asleep upon a rock. / What shall I say? He was surprised, / But nobly he carried himself, / He carried himself like a lion, / He and Winter, his companion.

Such lines are typical of Gaimar's lengthy description of the death of Hereward, which can conveniently be summarized under the following eleven headings, with the relevant line-numbers also given here:[81]

A	Hereward is caught by surprise at his castle;	(5615–19)
B	Ailward is supposed to stand guard, but instead falls asleep;	(5620–22)
C	Hereward kills one of his assailants with his javelin;	(5650–55)
D	Hereward kills four of his assailants with his sword;	(5669–72)
E	Hereward's sword shatters on the helmet of a fifth assailant;	(5673–74)
F	Hereward kills two of his attackers with his shield;	(5675–76)
G	Hereward is stabbed through the back by four spears;	(5677–78)
H	Hereward is unable to get up off his knees;	(5678–81)
I	Hereward throws his shield at another attacker and decapitates him;	(5682–85)
J	Hereward dies at the same time as his last victim;	(5688–90)
K	Hereward is decapitated.	(5691–93)

81. See Lange, *English and Icelandic Outlaw-Traditions*, 30; Lundgren, "Hereward and Outlawry," 160–61.

By contrast, the death of Grettir at the hands of a band led by his arch-enemy Þorbjǫrn ǫngull (Guðni Jónsson, 258–64) might be similarly summarized as taking place in the following very similar nine-part sequence (*Grettis saga*, ch. 82):

1. Grettir is caught by surprise at his island-refuge; [cf. Gaimar A]
2. Glaumr is supposed to stand guard, but instead falls asleep; [cf. Gaimar B]
3. Grettir kills a man with his spear; [cf. Gaimar C]
4. Grettir is unable to get up off his knees; [cf. Gaimar H]
5. Grettir uses his *sax* and cuts a man in two;
6. Þorbjǫrn ǫngull stabs Grettir with a spear between the shoulders; [cf. Gaimar G]
7. Þorbjǫrn ǫngull chops off Grettir's hand to gain the *sax*;
8. Þorbjǫrn ǫngull tries to use Grettir's own *sax* to cut off his head, but a piece breaks off; [cf. Gaimar E]
9. Grettir is decapitated. [cf. Gaimar K]

The death scene of the outlaw Gísli Súrsson (*Gísla saga*, chs. 34–36) also has some similarities to both of these accounts, but neither so many nor so close.[82]

Nor is Gaimar the only Anglo-Norman author linking the legend of Hereward in general, and the *Gesta Herwardi* in particular, with material other than in Old Norse-Icelandic or in Latin. Pickering quotes Nelles in pointing out ten points of similarity between chapter 5 of the *Gesta Herwardi*, which is set in Ireland, and the Anglo-Norman *Romance of Horn*, written around 1170 by an otherwise anonymous author who styles himself "Thomas," and is also responsible for (among other works) the *Romance of Tristan*:[83]

1. The young hero learns of a young woman being forced into marriage;
2. He travels secretly and in disguise;
3. At the wedding-feast, he takes his seat in a lowly position;
4. A woman recognizes the hero even through his disguise;

82. *Gísla saga Súrssonar*, Björn K. Þórólfsson, 109–16.

83. Walter R. Nelles, "The Ballad of Hind Horn," *Journal of American Folklore* 22 (1909): 54–55; cf. Pickering, "Legend of Hereward," 128–30. For further Anglo-Norman parallels, this time to the Tristan legend, see Thomas, "*Gesta Herwardi*," 217n19.

5. The betrothed woman makes the rounds with her female retinue, offering drinks, as is said to be the local custom;
6. The hero is particular about how he is served;
7. The betrothed woman recognizes the hero from his eyes, and gives him a ring;
8. The hero takes a harp and sings beautifully, to the amazement of all;
9. The hero appears to have given himself away by his behavior, and slips away from the feast;
10. The hero, with the help of his men, abducts the lady and takes her away to marry another.

In both the *Gesta Herwardi* and the Horn tradition, the hero then heads for home, learning from an old warrior of his father who fails to recognize him that the latter is dead (in the *Gesta Herwardi*, his brother) and that foreigners control the place; the old warrior laments the fact that the hero was not at home to protect it. The hero attacks the infiltrators, defeats them to the great joy of the locals, and takes back control of his home and family, of whom only his mother is left alive. Such a summary barely does justice to the complexity of the overlapping tales, though it does indicate the extent of the parallels.

Still further parallels between the *Gesta Herwardi* and French material are suggested by a lengthy anonymous poem of 3,207 octosyllabic rhymed couplets in Old French with traces of the dialect of Picardy on the life of the monk Eustache Busquet (ca. 1170–1217).[84] The poem itself, now entitled *Li Roman de Witasse Le Moine*, is found in only one manuscript, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français 1553 (fols. 325v-338v); the manuscript is dated 1284, although the poem itself may be up to sixty years older.[85] In a series of episodes, Eustache, a Benedictine who becomes an outlaw after his father is murdered, evades capture by disguising himself successively as a Cistercian monk (430–543), a shepherd (578–619), a pilgrim (twice: 776–97 and 900–29), a man selling hay (854–99), a coalman (996–1041), a potter (996–1041), a prostitute (1242–83), a peasant (1322–58), a leper (1400–22), a cripple (1423–93), a carpenter (1546–1637), a fisherman

84. *Li Roman de Witasse Le Moine: Roman du treizième siècle*, ed. Denis Joseph Conlon (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972); Kelly, "Eustache the Monk," in Ohlgren, *Medieval Outlaws*, 100–50.

85. Kelly, "Eustache the Monk," 100.

(1778–1819), a pastry cook (1820–81), a minstrel (2168–2216), and a messenger (2217–50). Eustache steals horses (three times: 544–77, 900–29, and 1466–93); in the last case, he steals the count's horse from outside a church, and is given away by the shouts of children, in a fashion that, without the concomitant violence, resembles the episodes involving Grettir and Hereward discussed above. In a further incident, Eustache fools his pursuers by reversing his horseshoes (1495–1545),[86] a trick also employed by Hereward (*Gesta Herwardi*, ch. 28 [26]):

> Interim ergo transuerso modo pedibus equorum suorum ferrum fecit imponere nec perciperetur e uestigiis eorum ubi pergere uellent aut ubi essent. Hoc etiam amicis et commilitonibus mandauit pro quibus tunc miserat ut sic facerent. (154)

> So meanwhile he had the shoes on his horses' feet reversed, so that it could not be determined from their tracks where they wanted to go or where they were. Hereward told his friends and fellow soldiers, for whom he had then sent, to do the same.

Tricks and disguises are associated more with the outlaw Gísli Súrsson (who disguises himself as an idiot out fishing in *Gísla saga*, ch. 26) than with the blunter and more direct Grettir, although Grettir does take on a disguise at the Hegranes-thing (*Grettis saga*, ch. 72), calling himself Gestr ("guest"). Neither Icelandic outlaw uses quite the same disguises of fisherman and potter in quite the same manner employed by Hereward (*Gesta Herwardi*, chs. 26–27).[87]

In yet another cunning stratagem, described in the *Liber de Hida*, Hereward plays dead in a way which again aligns him with both Norse and Norman sources:[88]

> Fertur denique quia semel cum quoddam castrum virtute vellet irrumpere, nec posset, mortuum se finxerat, feretroque impositum cum fallaci luctu ad ecclesiam ipsius castri incautis habitatoribus deferri

86. Pickering, "Legend of Hereward," 184.

87. One might note that a fisherman is also involved in Gaimar's account of Hereward and his men smuggling themselves past the surrounding Normans (lines 5504–23). See also Pickering, "Legend of Hereward," 182.

88. See Pickering, "Legend of Hereward," 71.

> sepeliendum jusserat. Mox ut securus illatum animadvertit, feretro totus armatus exsiluit castrumque cum habitatoribus fallaciter subjugavit. (*Chronica Monasterii de Hyda*, Edwards, 295)
>
> Finally, it is said that once when he wanted to take a certain castle by force, and could not, that he had pretended to be dead, and, when the inhabitants were caught unawares, had himself placed on a bier for burial inside the same castle. As soon as he knew that he had been carried in safely, he jumped off the bier fully armed, and by a trick conquered the castle and its inhabitants.

Lange speaks of the trick Hereward uses as being told of "the Viking Hasting [*recte* Hásteinn or Hafsteinn] at the siege of Luna," which he wrongly believed to be Rome.[89] The same thing is said twice about Frothi by Saxo Grammaticus in his *Gesta Danorum* (bk. 2, ch. 7, and bk. 3, ch. 8).[90] Haraldr harðráði is also described in several sources as having employed this deception.[91] Leach likewise notes that in a number of cases, "this game of possum was played by Normans or their kin,"[92] and in fact, there has been considerable discussion of the role that the Normans may have played in transmitting tales of this kind.[93]

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89. Lange, *English and Icelandic Outlaw-Traditions*, 4.

90. *Gesta Danorum*, Olrik, 38 and 46; Davidson, *History of the Danes*, 1:42 and 50; see also 2:40n10.

91. See further White, *Non-Native Sources*, 100 and 148–50. The passages in question appear as follows: Snorri Sturluson, *Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar*, ch. 10, in *Heimskringla*, Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, 3:80–81; *Morkinskinna*, ed. Finnur Jónsson, Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur 53 (Copenhagen: Jørgensen, 1932), 73–76; *Fagrskinna*, Bjarni Einarsson, 232–33. See Theodore M. Andersson and Kari Ellen Gade, trans., *Morkinskinna: The Earliest Icelandic Chronicle of the Norwegian Kings (1030–1157)*, Islandica 51 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 141–43; Alison Finlay, trans., *"Fagrskinna," a Catalogue of the Kings of Norway* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 186–87. See also Sigfús Blöndal, *The Varangians of Byzantium*, trans. and rev., Benedikt A. Benediktz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 72–73, and Klaus Rossenbeck, *Die Stellung der Riddarasǫgur in der altnordischen Prosaliteratur* (PhD diss., Universität Frankfurt, 1970), 70–74.

92. Leach, *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia*, 350.

93. See Frederic Amory, "The Viking Hasting in Franco-Scandinavian Legend," in *Saints, Scholars, and Heroes: Studies in Medieval Culture in Honour of Charles W. Jones*, ed. Margot H. King and Wesley M. Stevens, 2 vols. (Collegeville: Hill Monastic Manuscript Library, 1979): 1:265–86; Paul A. White, "The Latin Men: The Norman Sources of the Scandinavian Kings' Sagas," *JEGP* 98 (1999): 157–69; Jan de Vries, "Normannisches

Against the background of such obvious overlap between the legends of Hereward and Grettir, with other intertexts and parallels in a variety of different languages and texts of differing date, one might well conclude that a good tale well told bears repeating, and agree with the preface to the *Gesta Herwardi*:

> Propterea namque ut estimamus ad magnanimorum operum exempla et ad liberalitatem exercendam profectus erit Herwardum scire quis fuerit et magnanimitates illius audire et opera maxime autem miliciam exercere uolentibus. Vnde monemus aures aduertite et qui diligencius gesta uirorum forcium audire contenditis mentem apponite ut diligenter tanti uiri relatio audiatur qui nec in munitione nec in presidio sed in se ipso confisus solus cum suis regnis et regibus bella intulit et contra principes et tyrannos dimicauit quosque nonnullos deuicit. (76)

> So then it will be useful for us, considering examples of great-hearted exploits and the exercise of generosity, to know who Hereward was and to hear of his great-heartedness and especially for those who want to perform exploits and a warrior's deeds. So we urge you to listen carefully, particularly you who care to hear of the deeds of mighty men, and to pay close attention so that the tale may be told carefully of such a man, who, trusting not in a stronghold or in a fort but in himself alone with his own men waged war on kings and kingdoms, and fought against princes and bullies, and even defeated some.

In such a light, it has been said that "Hereward . . . has a brief life in history, and a long one in romance," and the same thing could surely be said of Grettir.[94] It certainly seems clear that there are numerous, specific, and intriguing parallels that link the *Gesta Herwardi* with Norse literature in general and with *Grettis saga* in particular. It seems also clear that both the *Gesta Herwardi* and *Grettis saga* have

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Lehngut in den isländischen Königssagas," *Arkiv för nordisk Filologi* 3 (1931): 51–79; Elizabeth M. C. Van Houts, "Scandinavian Influence in Norman Literature of the Eleventh Century," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 6 (1983): 107–21; *The "Gesta Normannorum ducum" Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni*, ed. Elisabeth M. C. Van Houts, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992–95), 1:xxxvi.

94. Charles Plummer, ed., *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899), 2:265.

similarly close connections with surviving Anglo-Norman and Franco-Scandinavian texts in both Latin and the Romance vernaculars, and that it is not madness to suppose that Normandy, glancing as it did both north and northwest, may have acted as fertile ground for such cross-pollination. Nor is the *Gesta Herwardi* the only Latin text with English links that bear witness to this kind of lively literary and cultural exchange. When it is recalled that all four of the Anglo-Latin texts considered here survive in no more than one or two manuscripts each, one can only speculate how many more such literary links have been lost. It seems likely that further scrutiny of other Latin texts might well yield still further results. If, in the final analysis, it cannot be said with certainty that Hereward's legend gave rise directly to that of Grettir, nor that the figure of Grettir immediately influenced the author of the *Gesta Herwardi*, the family ties that bind both outlaws, however defined, seem surely secure.[95]

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95. I am grateful to both Morgan Dickson and Samantha Zacher for reminding me in different ways of the importance of old ties and of the French connection—the mistakes remain mine.

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